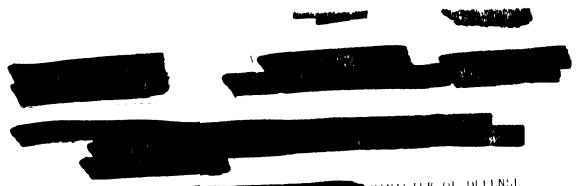


PROSECUTE MILITARY OFFICERS FOR ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS

VIOLATIONS.





- MINISTER OF DIFENSE.

 GENERAL CARLOS EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CSSANOVA CONFIDED TO OFFICERS
 OF THE SALVADORAN GENERAL STAFF THAT HE WAS TROUBLED BY GROWING
 INTEREST BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS OVER
 AN ATROCITY ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED BY MEMBERS OF MILITARY DETACHMENT
 SIX IN SONSONATE DEPARTMENT. (COMMENT: THE AIROCLLY,
 SPECIFICALLY THE MURDER OF 18 PEASANT MEMBERS OF A COOPERATIVE.
 FARM, TOOK PLACE ON 22 FEBRUARY AND EYEWITNESSES SAID THAT THE
 MURDERS WERE COMMITTED BY UNIFORMED TROOPS OF THE SIXTH
 DETACHMENT UNDER THE COMMANDER OF CAPIAIN SALVADOR ((FIGUEROA))
 MORALES.) VIDES CONFIDED THAT WHILE HE DID NOT DOUBT THAT
 FIGUEROA WAS GUILTY OF SUPERVISING THE MASSACRE OR THAT
 DETACHMENT SIX TROOPS WERE INVOLVED, HE PREFERRED THAT THE
 INCIDENT BE FORGOTTEN SINCE ANY PUBLIC MENTION OF THE CASE
 COULD ONLY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE TMAGE OF THE ARMED FORCES.
 - 2. VIDES INSTRUCTED LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICARDO ARISTIDES ((CIENFUEGOS)), CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES PRESS COMMISSION

(COPREFA), TO PLAY DOWN THE INCIDENT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

VIDES SAID THAT HE HAD TRANSFERRED CAPTAIN FIGUEROA FROM SONSONATE
TO MORAZAN AND STATED THAT HE HOPED THE MOVE WOULD SUFFICE AS
AN ALTERNATIVE TO PROSECUTING HIM. VIDES ADDED THAT HE HAD
NO INTENTION OF ALLOWING THE PROSECUTION OF COLONEL ELMER
((GONZALEZ)) ARAUJO, SONSONATE DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDER, ALTHOUGH
VIDES OPINED THAT GONZALEZ MAY HAVE ORDERED THE MASSACRE OF
THE PEASANTS. VIDES STRESSED HIS VIEW THAT PROSECUTION OF
MILITARY OFFICERS WOULD DAMAGE THE MORALE OF THE ARMED FORCES
AS A WHOLE AND THE OFFICER CORPS IN PARTICULAR AND WOULD
BE USED AS A PROPAGANDA ISSUE BY LEFTIST INSURGENTS.

THAT GENERAL VIDES HAS NO INTENTION OF PURSUING THE ISSUE TO HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE ARMED FORCES AS WAS DEMONSTRATED BY HIS APPOINTMENT OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL DENIS ((MORAN)), A WELL-KNOWN RIGHTIST IMPLICATED IN THE 1981 MURDERS OF TWO U.S. CITIZENS IN THE SHERATON HOTEL, TO HEAD THE ENGINEER INSTRUCTION CENTER (CITFA)).

